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A short statistical survey of enrollment for all Wisconsin public colleges and universities during the fall of 1961. Includes comparisons with several previous enrollment periods, particularly with enrollments for the fall of 1960. Summarizes enrollment trends in Wisconsin since 1951.

The paper is based on L. J. Lins, "Eighth Annual Report on Wisconsin College Enrollments," a report for Wisconsin's college registrars and admissions officers.

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Joint Staff Study
January, 1962

WISCONSIN COLLEGE ENROLLMENTS*

Fall, 1961

Wisconsin's public and private colleges and universities experienced their greatest numerical growth since 1955 when 73,117 day students enrolled for classes in the fall of 1961. The number enrolled represents a gain of 6,999 students -- an increase of 10.6 per cent -- over enrollments in the fall of 1960. In 1955 the state's public and private institutions absorbed 6,835 more students than were enrolled in 1954, a 15.7 per cent gain.

The 1961 gain in enrollments was attributable to an increase of 6,479 undergraduates and 520 graduate and professional students.

In addition to the day enrollments, a total of 10,723 students registered for on-campus extension and evening classes, an increase of 1,347 students for a 14.2 per cent gain over the 1960 total of 9,376 students.

The 1961 fall enrollment in all institutions is 42.1 per cent higher than the peak post-World War II enrollment of 51,461 and is 82.4 per cent higher than the 1951 Korean War low of 40,085.

Public institutions enrolled a larger portion of the day students than in 1960. The total of 51,356 students attending public colleges amounted to 70.2 per cent of the total Wisconsin college day enrollment as compared with 68.6 per cent a year ago. The percentage has risen steadily since 1954, when 62.6 per cent of the students was accounted for by public institutions.

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*Based on L. J. Lins, "Eighth Annual Report of Wisconsin College Enrollments." For Wisconsin's college registrars and admissions officers.

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Contributing significantly to the general growth of enrollments and to the increased enrollments at state-supported institutions was a gain of 2,933 students by the Wisconsin State Colleges. Whitewater and Oshkosh experienced gains of 29.4 and 26.3 per cent, respectively. Included in the 10.6 per cent over-all gain in higher education enrollments are gains of 13.2 per cent by public institutions and of 4.8 per cent by private institutions. See TABLE I.

TABLE I

Enrollment Changes, 1960-61

PUBLIC	Enrollment 1960	Enrollment 1961	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
University of Wisconsin (all)	26,627	29,048	2,421	9.1
Madison	18,811	20,118	1,307	6.9
Milwaukee	5,630	6,336	706	12.5
Extension Centers	2,186	2,594	408	18.7
Wisconsin State Colleges	15,644	18,577	2,933	18.7
Milwaukee Inst. of Tech.	1,794	2,352	558	31.1
County Teachers Colleges	1,298	1,379	81	6.2
TOTAL PUBLIC	45,363	51,356	5,993	13.2
PRIVATE				
Liberal Arts	17,389	18,146	757	4.4
Marquette University	7,746	8,056	310	4.0
Teacher Education	472	613	141	29.9
Technical and Professional	1,769	1,707	- 62	- 3.5
Theological Seminaries	843	887	44	5.2
Junior Colleges	282	408	126	44.7
TOTAL PRIVATE	20,755	21,761	1,006	4.8
TOTAL ALL COLLEGES	66,118	73,117	6,999	10.6

TABLE II provides a close look at enrollments at the several Wisconsin State Colleges.

TABLE II

Enrollment Changes, Wisconsin State Colleges

1960-1961

State College	1960	1961	Numerical Gain	Percentage Gain
Eau Claire	1,818	2,217	399	21.9
La Crosse	1,781	2,042	261	14.7
Oshkosh	2,251	2,842	591	26.3
Platteville	1,719	2,018	299	17.4
River Falls	1,445	1,680	235	16.3
Stevens Point	1,802	2,104	302	16.8
Stout	1,493	1,652	159	10.6
Superior	1,337	1,436	99	7.4
Whitewater	1,998	2,586	588	29.4
TOTAL	15,644	18,577	2,933	18.7

The day enrollment in the fall of 1961 (all colleges and universities) is 36.9 per cent of the estimated college-age population, as compared with 34.9 per cent last year and 22.7 per cent in the fall of 1951. See TABLE III. The aforementioned percentages were determined after revisions in the college-age, i.e., 18-21 year-old, "pool" estimated by Dean Ronald B. Thompson of Ohio State University, on the basis of 1960 census data. Careful readers of previous Joint Staff enrollment studies will note that Thompson's estimates of the college-age population in Wisconsin were slightly high in light of 1960 census figures.

TABLE III reveals that since 1957 the percentage of the estimated "pool" in attendance has risen from 31.5 per cent to 36.9 per cent.

TABLE III

Attendance Related to "Pool"
of 18-21 Year-olds

Year	Day Enrollments	Estimated College-Age Population	Per Cent Enrollment is of College-Age Population
1951	40,085	176,210	22.7
1957	55,744	176,792	31.5
1958	59,675	178,639	33.4
1959	61,788	181,765	34.0
1960	66,118	189,310	34.9
1961	73,117	198,351	36.9

Undergraduates

Undergraduates in the fall of 1961 numbered 65,258, an increase of 11.0 per cent, and constituted 89.3 per cent of the total day enrollment, 1.3 per cent more than in 1960. The relationship between undergraduate day enrollment and the estimated college-age population in 1961 is 32.9 per cent as opposed to 31.0 per cent in 1960.

Undergraduate enrollments increased by 19.0 per cent at the Wisconsin State Colleges, those at the University (all campuses) by 9.6 per cent, those at the county teachers colleges by 6.2 per cent, and those at private institutions of higher learning by 4.4 per cent.

In terms of numbers, there were 3,870 more undergraduate male and 2,609 more female undergraduate day students than a year ago. / See TABLE IV for undergraduate (total) enrollment changes. Almost 59 per cent of the total undergraduate day enrollment was accounted for by men. The percentage increases in male and female undergraduates were quite similar -- 11.2 per cent for the men, 10.7 per cent for the women.

TABLE IV

Undergraduate Enrollments, 1960-1961

	1960	1961	Change	% Change
PUBLIC				
University of Wisconsin (all campuses)	21,785	23,866	2,081	9.6
Madison	13,969	14,936	967	6.9
Milwaukee	5,630	6,336	706	12.5
Extension Centers	2,186	2,594	408	18.7
Wisconsin State Colleges	15,522	18,478	2,956	19.0
Milwaukee Inst. of Tech.	1,794	2,352	558	31.1
County Teachers Colleges	1,298	1,379	81	6.2
TOTAL PUBLIC	40,399	46,075	5,676	14.0
PRIVATE				
Liberal Arts	15,466	16,064	598	3.9
Marquette University	5,856	6,036	180	3.1
Teacher Education	472	613	141	29.9
Technical and Professional	1,693	1,631	- 62	- 3.7
Theological Seminaries	467	467	0	0.0
Junior Colleges	282	408	126	44.7
TOTAL PRIVATE	18,380	19,183	803	4.4
TOTAL ALL COLLEGES	58,779	65,258	6,479	11.0

Enrollments of day graduate students at the University increased by 350, a gain of 8.7 per cent. Private college graduate enrollments increased by 164, a 16.8 per cent gain. State College day graduate enrollments dropped from 122 to 99, a loss of 18.8 per cent. Enrollments in professional curricula throughout the state increased by 29 (1.3 per cent).

New Freshman Enrollments

New freshman students constituted almost 29 per cent of the total enrollment in Wisconsin colleges in 1961. A substantial increase in such students was experienced, particularly by the Wisconsin State Colleges, which enrolled 6,711 students (up 1,147, or 20.6 per cent since 1960) without previous college experience.

The Institute of Technology, Milwaukee, enrolled 285 more new freshmen than in 1960, up 39.2 per cent, and the University's extension centers gained 250 new freshmen, up 20.1 per cent over 1960 totals. Enrollments of new freshmen were up by 97 in private teacher education institutions (61.0 per cent). As a whole, the University system increased by 0.7 per cent, despite a 6.0 per cent drop on the Madison campus.

In 1960 private colleges increased more rapidly in terms of percentage gain in new freshmen than did public institutions. This situation was reversed in 1961, when public colleges enrolled 15,547 new freshmen, up 10.7 per cent, and private colleges enrolled 5,621 new freshmen, down 3.4 per cent from 1960 totals. Over-all, new freshmen numbered 21,168, up 6.6 per cent. TABLE V reveals changes in new freshman enrollments since 1957.

TABLE V

New Freshman Enrollment, 1957 - 1961

Institution	New Freshmen 1957	New Freshmen 1960	New Freshmen 1961	Increase 1960-61	Increase 1957-61
Degree-Granting					
Public					
University, Madison	2,583	3,982	3,744	-238	1,161
University, Milwaukee	1,400	1,827	1,867	40	467
State Colleges	4,001	5,564	6,711	1,147	2,710
	7,984	11,373	12,322	949	4,338

Private					
Liberal Arts	2,456	3,126	2,911	-215	455
Universities	1,503	1,695	1,593	-102	90
Teacher Education	194	159	256	97	62
Tech. & Prof.	499	481	500	19	1
Theological	119	199	166	- 33	47
	4,771	5,660	5,426	-234	655
Two-Year					
Public					
Extension Centers	831	1,244	1,494	250	663
County Teachers Colleges	559	700	719	19	160
Inst. of Tech., Milwaukee	460	727	1,012	285	552
	1,850	2,671	3,225	554	1,375
Private					
Junior Colleges	101	159	195	36	94
GRAND TOTAL	14,706	19,863	21,168	1,305	6,462

Trends, 1951-61

Since 1951, the estimated college-age population in Wisconsin has increased by 22,141. College enrollments during the same period have increased by 33,032. Undergraduates have increased by 31,118 (91.1 per cent). Graduate school enrollments have risen from 3,501 in 1951 to 5,632 in 1961, a gain of 60.9 per cent. Enrollments in professional schools continue to be down from 1951 totals, the 1961 figures dipping by 15 additional students, making the loss from the 1951 position equal 281 students.

The degree-granting institutions now enroll 26,158 more undergraduate students (day) than they registered in 1951. Public colleges have more than doubled their numbers of undergraduates, from 19,790 to 39,750. Private institutions have increased their undergraduate enrollments by about 50 per cent, growing from 12,577 to 18,775. The State Colleges have grown from 6,540 undergraduates in 1951 to 18,478 in 1961. Two-year institutions have added 4,960 students, the Institute of Technology accounting for 2,246, the extension centers 1,688 of these students.

Looking to the Future

Projecting college enrollments for the future is not a task of this paper. It is pertinent, however, to make note of certain developments which should bear heavily upon college attendance in the years ahead.

First, the college-age population is expected to increase rapidly, beginning in 1964. Between 1964 and 1970 the estimated number of 18-21 year-olds is forecast as increasing by 63,482; in a comparable period of time, i.e., 1958-1964 the estimated number of 18-21 year-olds increased by only 35,889. Thompson's estimates for 1961-78 are reproduced below:

TABLE VI

Estimates of College-Age Population, 1961-78*

Year	Estimated 18-21 Year Pool
1961	198,351
1962	202,693
1963	205,734
1964	214,528
1965	229,985
1966	245,572
1967	263,240
1968	269,570
1969	272,242
1970	278,010
1971	282,069
1972	289,708
1973	293,373
1974	296,992
1975	303,567
1976	307,053
1977	312,088
1978	317,009

*Source: Ronald B. Thompson, Enrollment Projections for Higher Education 1961-1978. American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, September, 1961. p. 31.

If no more than the present 36.9 per cent of the college-age population should attend in the future the possible outlook for Wisconsin college enrollments in 1965 is for 84,864 students and in 1970 for 102,586 students (assuming stability of such variables as world political and economic situations, etc.). The enrollment problem is magnified, of course, if the percentage should continue to increase as it has over the past 10 years, i.e., at an average rate of slightly more than one per cent per year.

Birth statistics lend credulity to Thompson's estimates. In 1940, for example, births in Wisconsin totaled 56,324. In 1946 births jumped to 74,868, an increase of 13,291 over 1945. In 1947 births rose again, this time to 84,562. Births remained in the 80 thousand bracket through 1953, hitting 91,570 in 1954. In 1960 the total was just short of 100,000 at 99,493.*

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*Thompson, op. cit., Appendix 1.